THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The information is furnished in Annexure A to C respectively. [*See* Appendix 189, Annexure No. 114]

(b) District-wise list is given in Annexure-D. [*See* Appendix 189, Annexure No. 114]

(c) Government plans are to provide public telephone facility in all the remaining revenue villages and panchayat villages in these districts progressively by March, 2002 also telephone on demand by March, 2002. For this new telephone exchanges are being opened and existing exchanges are expanded wherever required.

Connection of Ransar Valley to Jangla Telephone Exchange

4592. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received and demand from the people of Ransar Valley to connect Jangla Telephone Exchange through underground cables from Badiyara in Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to extend local call facility from Jangla to Shimla and criteria fixed for local call distance by Government for Hilly and Rural areas; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The issue has been raised by a Hon'ble M.P. At present, an Optical Fibre Cable System has been provided between Badiyara and Jangla exchange. There is no plan to lay underground cable as aerial optical fibre cable system is considered quite reliable.

(b) and (c) No Sir, as per existing departmental instructions, local call facility can not be extended from Rohru (Jangla) to Shimla as these are not adjacent Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCA's) and the radial distance between their Short Distance Charging Centres (SDCC's) is more than 50 Kms.